

# California CASA Programs

## 2004 Report



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
OF THE COURTS

CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN  
& THE COURTS

May 2005

## California CASA Programs 2004 Report

### Introduction

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained volunteer who is appointed by a judge, commissioner, referee, or other bench officer to provide one-on-one advocacy for a child who is under the jurisdiction of the courts owing to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. These volunteers spend time with children, ensure that court-ordered services are provided, attend court hearings for children to which they are assigned, and provide child-focused recommendations to the court based on the best interests of the children they serve.

CASA programs were first implemented in 1977 in Washington State; the following year the first CASA program in California began providing services to children. In 1988, legislation amended California's Welfare and Institutions Code (§ 100 et seq.) to require the Judicial Council to establish guidelines encouraging the development of local CASA programs. As a result, the Judicial Council adopted rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court, which contains mandated requirements that CASA programs must follow. The Judicial Council works closely with the California CASA Association to ensure that programs are in compliance with both rule 1424 and national CASA standards.

There are 39 local CASA programs providing services in 40 of California's 58 counties, as well as one Tribal CASA program.<sup>1</sup> In 2004, California local CASA programs served about 8,016 children: about 4,500 CASA volunteers donated 569,473<sup>2</sup> hours to advocate for 7,239 of those children and program staff alone served the other 777 children.

### Data Highlights

#### Database Conversion

In 2004, all California CASA programs received an upgraded version of their current database, or migrated to a new database altogether. The upgrade was necessary to facilitate the collection of statewide outcomes data. Many programs both reviewed and made any necessary corrections to the data as they became aware of database issues, before and after the conversions. It is unclear, whether the database conversions may have affected the quality of the 2004 data submitted for the annual survey.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In 2004, the Karuk Tribal CASA program was established in Northern California, the first tribal CASA program in the state; this report does not include the Karuk program's data.

<sup>2</sup> The number of volunteer hours should be viewed cautiously as there is no standardized method for collecting such data in California (see page 2).

<sup>3</sup> The database conversions did not affect fiscal or salary data reported.

During 2004, 68 percent of programs used CASA Manager, 26 percent of programs used CASA Tracker, and 5 percent of programs used COMET. Some programs were in the process of switching to new databases at the end of 2004; therefore these numbers will change in 2005.

In addition to the database conversion during 2004, all California programs received data collection training that enhanced program staff's understanding of data collection in general. Although the overall California numbers for many of the data categories in the 2004 annual survey appear to be lower than in 2003, these numbers may be the result of more accurate data collection efforts as opposed to workload decline.<sup>4</sup>

### **Volunteer Hours**

In 2004, volunteers reported donating 569,473 hours, compared to 680,306 hours reported last year.<sup>5</sup> When assessing the decline in the number of hours reported, several factors must be considered: (1) there has been no standardized method in California for collecting volunteer hours in terms of exactly what data are to be collected, (2) programs report that volunteers frequently *underreport* hours,<sup>6</sup> (3) there are discrepancies between programs as to who performs specific activities on behalf of children (the volunteer or the case supervisor), and (4) one of the database programs used reported volunteer hours from only one hours category, resulting in an underreport to the National CASA office of approximately 35,000 hours<sup>7</sup>. The following list highlights the most common challenges programs face when collecting volunteer hours:

- Volunteers state that it is impossible to track everything they do for children.<sup>8</sup> Because the tracking of all the activities they perform is so onerous, hours donated are often *underreported*.
- The types of hours reported can greatly fluctuate from volunteer to volunteer depending on individual memory and choice.
- Not all programs are alike; because there is no standardized method for what should be collected, programs differ in terms of what they ask the volunteers to track. Further, tasks that volunteers may perform for children they serve in one program are performed instead by case supervisors in another.
- Some programs report that up to 50 to 55 percent of volunteers do not record hours at all and these programs merely estimate the total number of hours donated based on the hours submitted by the small population of reporting volunteers.
- When considering the importance of volunteer retention, programs state that there is often a fine line between the need to enforce the collection totals for volunteer hours and the risk of losing a volunteer because they haven't tracked or submitted their donated time.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Methodology*, page 16.

<sup>5</sup> A more detailed description of the kinds of activities that volunteers in California track can be found in *Methodology*, pages 17 and 18.

<sup>6</sup> California CASA programs were polled in February/March of 2005 by the Judicial Council, to determine (to the extent possible) what the general practice is in regard to the types of activities volunteers track when reporting hours. A total of 95 percent of programs responded to the poll.

<sup>7</sup> The reporting of volunteer hours for the Annual Survey Report in the CASA Tracker database had not yet been revised at the time of this survey; since this time, the report has been revised.

<sup>8</sup> Statements to this effect are often communicated to the Judicial Council in volunteer focus groups, which are part of the California CASA Program Evaluation process.

## Findings Summary

Findings reported here are those of the California respondents to the 2004 Local Program Survey administered by the National CASA Association (NCASAA).<sup>9</sup>

- A total of **95 percent** of programs responded to the survey ( $n = 37$ ).
- Approximately **4,500 volunteers** served children in 2004.
- Approximately **8,016 children** were served by California CASA programs in 2004; 7,239 children were served by volunteers, and 777 children were served exclusively by program staff.
- Approximately **6 percent** of children in the California dependency system are served by CASAs.
- Volunteers statewide reported more than **569,473 donated hours** in service to California children, at a monetary value of **\$9,994,251**<sup>10</sup>.
- In 2004, statewide actual total program revenue was **\$15,805,733**.

### Snapshot of a Typical California CASA Program

In existence for 11.5 years  
6 program staff, or 4.25 FTE  
91 volunteers  
Average of 127 hours donated annually per volunteer  
155 children served  
\$269,571 total revenue

\*Data represent median numbers, except for hours donated.

## Program Highlights

### Program Age

The median age of responding programs in 2004 was 11.5 years; program age ranged from 1 to 27 years old.<sup>11</sup> In California, 22 percent of programs have been serving children for 5 years or fewer and 58 percent of the programs began serving children more than 10 years ago.

### Program Revenue

About 55 percent of responding programs reported revenue increases from 2003, 21 percent reported constant revenue, and 24 percent reported decreased revenue.<sup>12</sup>

For purposes of analysis, California CASA programs are divided into three regions.<sup>13</sup> Median total revenue for each program was as follows: Bay Area/Northern Coastal, \$378,000; Northern/Central, \$93,975; and Southern, \$366,500. Median total revenue for each region changed as compared to 2003; Bay Area/Northern Coastal realized a 25 percent increase in median total revenue, Northern/Central

<sup>9</sup> The data in this report may vary from the data submitted to the National CASA Association; the Judicial Council contacted counties that submitted erroneous data, or no data, and worked with those counties to make necessary revisions.

<sup>10</sup> Total number of hours multiplied by \$17.55 (Independent Sector's national 2004 rate for the value of a volunteer hour).

<sup>11</sup> For purposes of this report, "program age" is defined as the point at which programs began to serve children, rather than when the program was established.

<sup>12</sup> The information reported in the survey was for calendar year 2004, except for the fiscal data, in which case programs were asked to report the most recent fiscal year. The most recent fiscal year was 2003–2004 for 97 percent of responding programs, and calendar year 2003 for 3 percent of programs.

<sup>13</sup> Program regions are aligned with the California Administrative Office of the Courts designated regions (see Appendix 2).

experienced a 75 percent decline, and the Southern region experienced a 32 percent decline in median total revenue. The decline in the Northern/Central median revenue was due to the addition of several first year programs with low total funding in conjunction with a decline in revenue for 50 percent of the programs in this region (mostly rural). Although the *median* total revenue for the Southern region dropped by 32 percent, the aggregate *actual* total revenue increased by 6 percent.

The median total revenue statewide was \$269,571, about 1 percent below the 2003 level (\$271,017). The aggregate *actual* total program revenue statewide was about 2 percent lower than last year.

### Cost per Child

The overall median cost per child of \$2,049 in 2004 remained fairly constant as compared to the prior year. The two variables that this calculation is derived from also remained constant: median total budgeted expenses for all programs and median number of children served for all programs. A summary of the 2004 data is shown in table 1.

Differences in cost per child and budgeted expenses vary between regions primarily because of base population, the geographic size and location of each county, and available funding resources.

Table 1. Median dollar amounts for total budgeted expenses and cost per child in 2004 ( $n = 37$ )

Region served	Total budgeted expenses	Cost per child served
Bay Area/Northern Coastal	\$378,000	\$2,246
Northern/Central	\$130,043	\$1,715
Southern	\$435,273	\$2,014
All programs	\$234,000	\$2,049

### Value of Volunteer Time

Although the number of volunteer hours must be viewed cautiously, the value of volunteer time can still be estimated<sup>14</sup> based on what is known;<sup>15</sup> this estimation reflects the minimum monetary value of core service that CASA volunteers perform. As shown in table 2, the monetary value of volunteer time for 2004 was \$9,994,251.

Table 2. 2004 Value of volunteer time by region ( $n = 37$ )

Region served	Total actual volunteer hours	Value of volunteer time
Bay Area/Northern Coastal	227,195	\$3,987,272
Northern/Central	80,448	\$1,411,862
Southern	261,830	\$4,595,117
All programs	569,473	\$9,994,251

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 10.

<sup>15</sup> "What is known" means that volunteer hours are underreported and at a minimum, volunteers report "core hours" for 97 percent of programs. From this information, therefore: (1) the total number of volunteer hours represents a minimum number of hours, and (2) the total number of hours represents at least core service to children (see page 17 of *Methodology* for definition of "core hours" and for a more in depth discussion regarding types of volunteer hours).

## Funding Sources

The most common CASA program revenue sources were “state,” “individual donors,” “other fundraising events,” “foundation grants,” “corporate contributions,” and “county.” Many of the highest median amounts contributed were generated from the most common donors. These particular revenue sources have remained strong contributors to CASA programs statewide for the past several years, as seen in table 3.

### Public

Overall, funding from various state and federal resources was also strong during 2004, although the median funding levels decreased in many categories. The median funding level received from cities showed a noticeable decrease (50 percent); this decline could be indicative of the continued challenges California cities face in the current economic climate. While the median funding level received from “court” appears to have declined, it is difficult to verify, since 2004 represented the first year in which a standardized category was defined for Judicial Council funding; the shift to a standardized category (“state”) may have resulted in a shift of the median funding level for “court” (see Note, table 3).

### Private

As mentioned above, individual donors, foundation grants, and corporate contributions remained strong funding sources for California CASA programs in 2004. The percentage of programs that received funding from corporations and individual donors was constant from 2003 to 2004. The median funding level provided by corporations and individual donors increased by 66 percent and 16 percent respectively. Although the median amount received from foundations fell by 12 percent, foundations were an important funding source in 2004 and continued to provide much-needed revenue to the CASA programs they support.

Also noteworthy were contributions made by “community service organizations and clubs” and “In-kind donations”; both of these funding sources have provided significant support to CASA programs over the last few years. The number of programs receiving in-kind donations fell dramatically; the median funding level increase in this category may be a result of a shift in funding level for fewer receiving programs. It is unclear from the data what caused the sharp decline in the number of programs receiving in-kind donations.

### Fundraising

Over the past few years, roughly 30 percent of programs have generated revenue from various product sales. Some 27 percent of programs used this fundraising method in 2004. Examples of the products sold included birdhouses, Easter Lilies, seed packets, and holiday cards.

In 2004, 73 percent of responding programs received revenue from unspecified fundraising events, and the median revenue level generated by fundraising activities decreased by 20 percent from 2003. In spite of the decrease, programs raised a substantial amount of funding during these events. Fundraising events included “Lavender Days,” “Kids Day,” dinners, luncheons, box lunches for businesses, live and silent auctions, raffles, CASA Golf Classics, and “Celebration Parties” hosted in homes and businesses. Many of these fundraisers attracted from hundreds to thousands of people; local press contributed to event success and helped build CASA name recognition.

Table 3. Detail of funding sources, percent of receiving programs, and median funding amounts for the last three years

Funding source	% of receiving programs in 2004 (n = 37)	% of receiving programs in 2003 (n = 37)	% of receiving programs in 2002 (n = 33)	Median funding amount in 2004	Median funding amount in 2003	Median funding amount in 2002
<b>Public</b>						
Court	46%	65%	68%	\$34,000	\$49,521	\$38,400
State	100%	68%	68%	\$43,000	\$47,000	\$50,340
County	54%	57%	62%	\$42,500	\$50,000	\$33,000
City	19%	19%	32%	\$5,900	\$12,000	\$13,000
Federal (other)	3%	8%	24%	\$35,540	\$25,000	\$40,420
NCASAA grant	30%	32%	35%	\$39,535	\$40,000	\$25,500
CDBG (federal \$)	24%	16%	n/a	\$44,644	\$44,353	n/a
Title IV-E (federal \$)	5%	3%	3%	\$64,138	\$60,000	\$30,000
TANF (federal \$)	3%	3%	n/a	\$12,770	\$4,035	n/a
<b>Private</b>						
Corporate contributions	59%	57%	47%	\$16,678	\$10,000	\$20,000
United Way	41%	43%	56%	\$8,500	\$9,681	\$10,000
Foundation grants	62%	65%	59%	\$65,000	\$73,063	\$48,500
Individual donors	78%	76%	76%	\$18,879	\$16,550	\$18,580
Community service organizations/clubs	46%	46%	44%	\$3,000	\$6,498	\$2,500
In-kind donations (goods & services)	43%	73%	65%	\$36,792	\$25,000	\$21,500
Kappa Alpha Theta	16%	19%	29%	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,280
Church donations	19%	22%	26%	\$700	\$3,372	\$2,060
<b>Fundraising</b>						
CASA Light of Hope	19%	16%	18%	\$3,000	\$11,050	\$12,830
CASA Playhouse	0%	3%	n/a	0%	\$182,771	n/a
Membership dues	3%	3%	3%	\$125	\$4,458	\$1,200
Other fundraising	73%	78%	82%	\$40,000	\$50,000	\$36,000
Product sales	27%	35%	29%	\$2,350	\$2,820	\$4,500
Other sources	41%	46%	50%	\$13,250	\$10,709	\$13,270
<b>Median Total Revenue</b>				\$236,000	\$271,017	\$244,000

Note: All responding programs received funding from the Judicial Council during 2004 (and in 2002 and 2003 as well); programs identified the funding under the “state” category. In 2003 and prior years, there was no standardized category, but most counties identified the funding under either the “state” or the “court” category.

## Overview of Funding Sources in Relation to Program Revenue

Table 4 provides an overview of the median percent of total program revenue raised by funding source for each region, as well as the number of programs in each region that received support from each funding source. The information illustrates the extent to which programs relied on particular funding sources by region and also provides a comparison between the regions.

The median percent of a program's revenue raised by "other fundraising" was fairly consistent for all three regions. Bay Area/Northern Coastal programs relied more on various federal monies than programs in either of the other two regions, while Northern/Central programs relied mostly on state resources and in-kind donations. Southern programs were somewhat more evenly diversified across the board and relied on "foundations" as their greatest revenue source.

Table 4. Median percent of total program revenue raised by funding source and region in 2004<sup>16</sup>

Funding Source	Bay Area/North. Coast		Northern/Central		Southern		Statewide	
	% of revenue	N = 13	% of revenue	N = 15	% of revenue	N = 9	% of revenue	N = 37
Court	10%	6	21%	4	15%	7	15%	17
State	15%	13	39%	15	11%	9	22%	37
County	16%	9	9%	7	5%	4	12%	20
City	1.5%	2	1%	2	2%	3	2%	7
TANF	n/a	0	n/a	0	3%	1	3%	1
Title IV-E	18%	1	n/a	0	6%	1	12%	2
NCASAA	11%	5	6%	3	6%	3	9%	11
CDBG	17%	4	7%	3	12%	2	12%	9
Other (federal \$)	n/a	0	6%	1	n/a	0	6%	1
Corporations	4%	11	4%	6	3%	5	4%	22
Individuals	8%	13	4%	8	8%	9	5%	29
Membership Dues	0% <sup>17</sup>	1	n/a	0	n/a	0	0%	1
CASA Light of Hope	0%	2	0.5%	2	6%	3	1%	7
Other fundraising	16%	12	13%	1	16%	5	16%	27
Product sales	0%	5	1%	2	1%	3	0.5%	10
United Way	0%	3	4%	5	3%	7	3%	15
Foundations	12%	10	10%	7	25%	6	12%	23
Kappa Alpha Theta	0%	3	1%	1	1%	2	0.5%	6
Churches	0%	4	0%	1	0.5%	2	0%	7
Community Service	1%	9	1%	5	1%	3	1%	17
In-kind	15%	5	15%	7	10%	4	15%	16
Other sources	1%	6	4%	3	7%	4	3%	15

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 11.

<sup>17</sup> Whenever "0%" appears in table 4, it indicates that the median percent of total revenue raised was less than 0.5 percent.



## CASA Staff

### Number of Positions

CASA programs reported a median of 6 staff: typically 4 full-time and 2 part-time positions. Programs also reported a median of 4.25 total full-time equivalents and an FTE range of .4 to 24.1.

During 2004, 32 percent of programs gained staff positions, 19 percent reported no change, and 49 percent reported losing positions. The median number of positions gained was 1 and the median number of positions lost was 1.

### Demographics

In 2004, 81 percent of all CASA program staff were female; 19 percent were male. Racial/ethnic demographics are shown in table 5:

Table 5. Percentage of all staff, volunteers, and children served in each racial/ethnic group in 2004

Race/Ethnicity	Staff	Volunteers	Children served
African American	6%	5%	17%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	3%	1%
Caucasian	66%	69%	34%
Latino	17%	8%	31%
Native American	2%	1%	3%
Multi racial	1%	2%	6%
Other	2%	3%	1%
Unknown	n/a	9%	7%
<b>Statewide totals</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>8,016</b>

In 2004, 55 percent of children served by volunteers were children of color, predominantly Latino (31 percent) and African–American (17 percent). As seen in table 5, racial/ethnic disparities between staff, volunteers, and children continue—particularly for African-American and Latino children served. A smaller percent of race/ethnicity data for volunteers and children was identified by programs as “unknown” in 2004, than was the case in the prior year. The number of Caucasian and Latino children served increased over the prior year by 3 percent and 6 percent respectively; these gains may relate to reduced numbers of children reported in the “unknown” category. Likewise, the number of Caucasian volunteers increased by 2 percent; again, this could be related to the lower unknown race/ethnicity for volunteers.



## Executive Director Position

**Hours.** The median number of hours worked for all programs, and in all program regions, was 40 per week.

**Salary.** The median executive director's salary, when adjusted for full-time equivalent status, was \$52,020 annually, which represents a slight increase over 2003. The salary medians for 2004 are shown in table 6.

Table 6. Annual median salaries based on one full-time equivalent in 2004 by program region

Region	Executive Director
Bay Area/Northern Coastal (n = 13)	\$70,000
Northern/Central (n = 15)	\$50,000
Southern (n = 9)	\$55,385
<b>All programs</b>	<b>\$52,020</b>

**Benefits.** During 2004, 84 percent of responding programs provided benefits to the executive director and 16 percent did not.

Table 7. In 2004, the number of programs providing benefits to executive directors by benefit type and program region

Benefit Type	Executive Director			
	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal (n = 13)	Northern/ Central (n = 15)	Southern (n = 9)	All programs (n = 37)
Health	11	12	8	31
Dental	9	7	2	18
Retirement	7	6	3	16
Other	4	3	2	9
None	1	3	2	6

## Volunteer Coordinators

**Hours.** The median number of hours worked by volunteer coordinators for all programs, and in all program regions, was 40 per week and remained constant compared to the previous year.

**Number of volunteer coordinators per program.** In 2004, 95 percent of all responding programs had a volunteer coordinator; the median number of volunteer coordinators per program was 1.5.

**Salary.** The median volunteer coordinator's salary, when adjusted for full-time equivalent status, was \$34,560 annually (Table 8), a 7.5 percent increase over 2003.

Table 8. Annual median salaries based on one full-time equivalent by program region in 2004 (*n* = 35)

Region	Volunteer coordinator
Bay Area/Northern Coastal ( <i>n</i> = 13)	\$39,000
Northern/Central ( <i>n</i> = 13)*	\$31,020
Southern ( <i>n</i> = 9)	\$35,000
<b>All Programs</b>	<b>\$34,560</b>

Two of the 15 responding Northern/Central counties had no volunteer coordinators at the time of this survey.

**Benefits.** During 2004, 80 of volunteer coordinator positions statewide included benefits, representing a 3 percent increase over 2003. Table 9 shows a breakdown of volunteer benefits by program region.

Table 9. The number of programs providing benefits to volunteer coordinators by benefit type and program region in 2004

Benefit type	Volunteer coordinator			
	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal ( <i>n</i> = 13)	Northern/ Central ( <i>n</i> = 13)*	Southern ( <i>n</i> = 9)	All ( <i>n</i> = 35)
Health	11	9	7	27
Dental	9	5	2	16
Retirement	6	3	3	12
Other	4	1	2	7
None	1	4	2	7

Two of the 15 responding Northern/Central counties had no volunteer coordinators at the time of this survey.

The following provides a snapshot of the total compensation package by program region for executive directors and volunteer coordinators:

*Bay Area/Northern Coastal*

- 100 percent of executive directors with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 85 percent of executive directors with salaries below the median received benefits
- 100 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 83 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries below the median received benefits

*Northern/Central*

- 75 percent of executive directors with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 86 percent of executive directors with salaries below the median received benefits
- 71 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 67 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries below the median received benefits

*Southern*

- 100 percent of executive directors with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 75 percent of executive directors with salaries below the median received benefits
- 83 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries at or above the median received benefits
- 67 percent of volunteer coordinators with salaries below the median received benefits

CASA Volunteers

**Number of Volunteers and Hours Contributed**

Responding programs reported an overall median of 91 volunteers actively serving children. There was a median of 94 volunteers in Bay Area/Northern Coastal programs, 30 volunteers in Northern/Central programs, and 165 volunteers in Southern programs. Many of the programs in the Northern/Central region are located in small rural counties with low general populations, and therefore lower dependency populations than in the other two regions.

More than 569,473 hours were donated by volunteers to serve children in 2004. Each volunteer contributed an average of 127 hours annually. As previously mentioned, the number of volunteer hours should be viewed cautiously since there has been no standardized method thus far for collecting such data (see page 2).

In 2004, California programs trained 1,335 new volunteers, who were sworn in by California courts.

**Demographics**

Where gender was reported, 81 percent of volunteers were women and 19 percent were men. The race/ethnicity breakdowns were similar to those for CASA staff (table 5): 69 percent were Caucasian, followed by Latino (8 percent), African–American (5 percent), Asian (3 percent), Native American (1 percent), Other (3 percent), and Multi racial (2 percent). Race/ethnicity was unknown for 9 percent of volunteers (many volunteers declined to state their race/ethnicity).

Volunteer age breakdowns were as follows: 11 percent were under 30; 15 percent were 30 to 39; 19 percent were 40 to 49; 24 percent were 50 to 59; 24 percent were 60 and older. Age data for 7 percent of volunteers was unknown.

## Children Served

### Number Served

In 2004, CASA programs served a median of 155 children. One-fourth of programs served 65 or fewer children while one-fourth served more than 251 children. Medians differed by region served: a median of 160 children were served in the Bay Area/Northern Coastal region, 54 in the Northern/Central region, and 251 in the Southern region.

The median number of children served by volunteers was 127. The breakdown by region was: a median of 145 children were served in the Bay Area/Northern Coastal region, 54 in the Northern/Central region, and 211 in the Southern region. Typically, the ratio between volunteers and children was one-to-one. Some volunteers chose to serve more than one child at a time or to serve a sibling group. However, most California CASA programs followed a one-to-one model.

In addition to volunteers, 45 percent of program staff served those children not yet assigned to a CASA; the median number of children served by staff was 17 per program. Programs used staff to serve children without volunteers for a variety of reasons. Most commonly, staff monitored children on wait lists and began the process of ensuring that necessary services were in place, attended any court hearings for those children, acted as an educational surrogate, or performed all of these functions. In addition, some programs received grant money for specific projects that necessitated close staff interaction with children receiving project-related or funded services.

During 2004, 2,637 new children were served and 2,617 children's cases were closed, indicating that the number of children served during 2004 grew very little.

### Case Types Served

In addition to child abuse and neglect cases, 19 programs served other types of cases: 16 programs served children in delinquency proceedings; 3 programs served children in divorce custody cases; 2 programs served children in probate; 1 program served children in mediation cases; and 3 programs served children in other non case type ways such as supervised visitation and courtesy supervision.

### Outcomes at Case Closure

Table 10 describes the most common outcomes for children at court case closure or CASA program case closure in 2004.

Table 10. Most common outcomes at case closure in 2004 ( $n = 2,617$ )

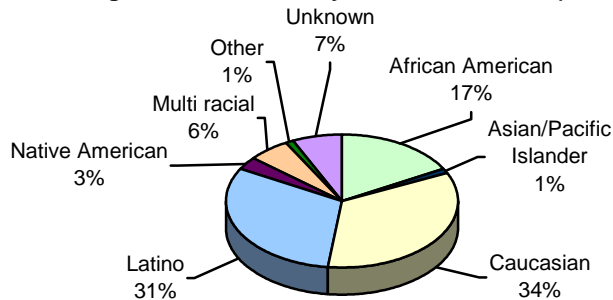
Outcome at case closure	% of children whose cases closed
Returned to family	29%
Adopted	14%
Child aged out of system/Emancipation	12%
Placed with legal guardians	8%
Other (long-term foster care or long-term relative care)	5%
Other (need for CASA met/CASA resigned)	3%

## Children's Demographics

In 2004 the gender of children served by the programs was evenly divided between boys and girls (50/50).

Child ethnicity is shown in figure 1 (demographics comparing child race/ethnicity to volunteers and program staff are given in table 5):

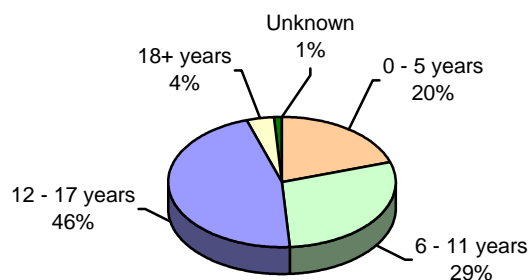
**Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity of children in 2004 (n = 8,016)**



Available point-in-time child welfare data for California as of October 1, 2004, provides a rough comparison to the CASA children served.<sup>18</sup> Race/ethnicity data for all children in out-of-home placement:<sup>19</sup> 31 percent were African-American, 27 percent were Caucasian, 39 percent were Latino, 2 percent were Asian/Other, 1 percent were Native American, and in less than 0.5 of cases the data was missing. This data suggests that the race/ethnicity of CASA children served in 2004 was not reflective of the general child welfare population in that both African American and Latino children were underrepresented and Caucasian children were overrepresented.

Figure 2 shows the age breakdown of children served.

**Figure 2. Age of children served in 2004 (n = 8,016)**



<sup>18</sup> B Needell, D Webster, S Cuccaro-Alamin, M Armijo, S Lee, B Lery, T Shaw, W Dawson, W Piccus, J Magruder, & H Kim. (2004). *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. (2004). Retrieved [May 5, 2005], from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/>. This data was point-in-time, as opposed to the data reported in the Annual Survey, which was for calendar year 2004.

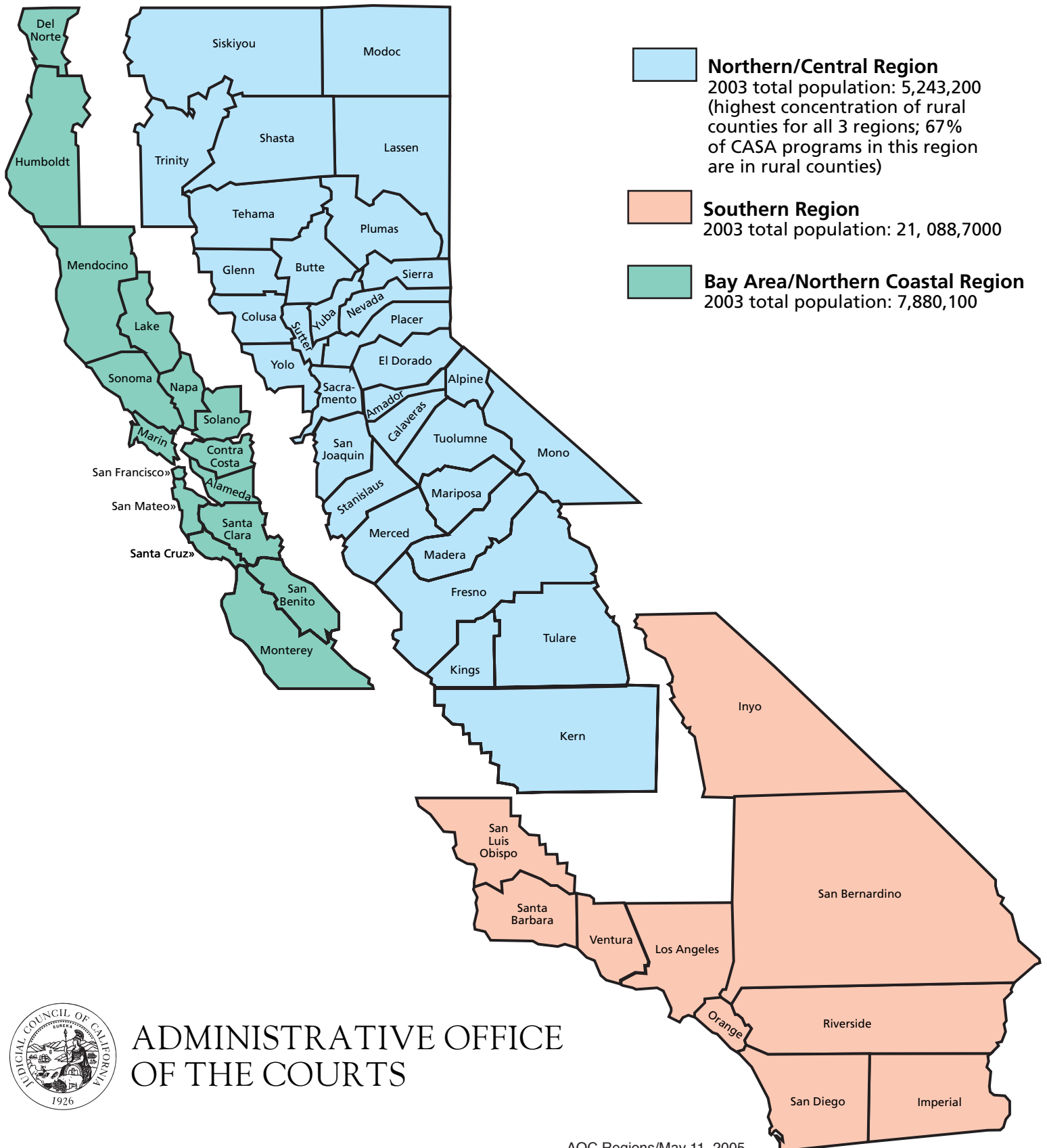
<sup>19</sup> Available data did not include children in family maintenance; many CASA programs served children in this placement category.

## Appendix 1

Program respondents included in data set in 2004 ( $n = 37$ )

County	Program name
Alameda	Alameda County CASA Program
Amador	Amador-Tuolumne Community Actions Agency/Amador County CASA Program
Butte	CASA of Butte County
Contra Costa	CASA of Contra Costa County
Del Norte	CASA of Del Norte
Fresno	CASA of Fresno County
Humboldt	CASA of Humboldt
Imperial	CASA of Imperial County
Kern	CASA of Kern County
Lassen	Lassen Family Services/Lassen County CASA Program
Los Angeles	CASA of Los Angeles
Marin	Marin Advocates/Marin CASA Program
Mariposa	CASA of Mariposa County
Mendocino	CASA of Mendocino County
Modoc	T.E.A.C.H./Modoc CASA Program
Monterey	CASA of Monterey County
Napa	Volunteer Center of Napa Valley/CASA of Napa County
Nevada	Child Advocates of Nevada County
Orange	CASA of Orange County, Inc.
Placer	Child Advocates of Placer County
Plumas	Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center/Plumas County CASA
Riverside	CASA for Riverside County, Inc.
Sacramento	Sacramento CASA Program, Inc.
San Bernardino	Child Advocates of San Bernardino County
San Diego	Voices for Children, Inc./San Diego CASA
San Francisco	San Francisco CASA Program
San Joaquin	San Joaquin CASA Program
San Luis Obispo	Voices for Children, Inc./CASA of San Luis Obispo County
Santa Barbara	CASA of Santa Barbara County
Santa Clara/San Mateo	Child Advocates of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties
Santa Cruz	CASA of Santa Cruz County
Solano	Solano County CASA
Sonoma	CASA of Sonoma County
Stanislaus	CASA of Stanislaus County
Tulare	CASA of Tulare County
Ventura	Interface/CASA of Ventura County
Yolo	Yolo County CASA

# AOC Regions



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## Appendix 3

### Methodology

This report summarizes data collected by 37 of California's 39 local CASA programs as part of National CASA Association's 2004 annual survey; the data discussed represents those 37 programs that responded to the survey, unless otherwise noted. All tables and charts note the number of respondents ( $n = xx$ ) for the data represented. As previously mentioned, the data in this report may vary from the data submitted to National CASA because of follow-up efforts with the counties regarding typographic errors, and erroneous or no data submitted; in these instances, data errors were largely corrected and the corrected data is reflected in this report. Three programs are excluded from this report as they were in developmental or transitional stages in 2004 and therefore had insufficient data to report. One additional program was unable to generate the necessary data at the time the survey was due. And one program closed in 2004.

Medians are used in this report to reflect data submitted; the exception relates to hours donated, in which case averages were used.<sup>20</sup>

### Cases

The number of cases is a difficult statistic to accurately track in California owing to varying local court practice with respect to filing dependency petitions for sibling groups. Of the 40 California counties with CASA programs, 27 (68 percent) assign one case number per child, 10 (25 percent) assign one case number per sibling group, and 3 (7 percent) assign a single case number depending on whether the children enter the system together and whether the shared parent is a mother or a father. Therefore, no one-to-one correlation can be made between number of dependency cases and the number of dependent children. Given the difficulty in tracking the number of cases, which is a systemic problem beyond the scope of the CASA programs, the data was omitted from this report.

### Children Served

Demographics for number of children served include those children who were served by both volunteers and program staff. Approximately 8,016 children were served by CASA programs in 2004.

With regard to the total number of children served in 2003, several counties overreported the number of children served (estimated at 500). Therefore, the overall number of children served in 2004 was expected to be lower (see *California CASA Programs 2003 Report*).<sup>21</sup> For those programs that previously used the COMET database, several programs stated that the overreporting was due to a "logical inconsistency" in COMET. Closing a case in COMET is a two-step process; while program staff remembered to *close* a child's case on the child screen, they would often forget to also *unassign* the volunteer from the child (by clicking on the volunteer button and entering a date of release), resulting in inaccurate numbers.

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<sup>20</sup> Medians represent the midpoint in values: Half of the values are higher than the median while half are lower. Using medians in place of averages eliminates the skewing of data by a small number of programs that might be significantly different from the others, especially when the total number of programs is low.

<sup>21</sup> Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts. *California CASA Programs 2003 Report*. (2004).

## Types of Volunteers

In addition to the traditional role of CASA, several programs provide further volunteer opportunities for assisting children. Instead of (or in addition to) serving as a CASA, a volunteer may serve as a Court Appointed Special Monitor (CASM) or as an educational surrogate. All three of these volunteer roles include spending time with the child and submitting court reports.<sup>22</sup> Volunteer demographics include all types of volunteers (as defined below) who spent time with children and submitted court reports. In this report, the references “CASAs,” “volunteers,” and “advocates,” include all three categories mentioned here.

- **CASA volunteers** spend time with children of all ages, ensure that court-ordered services are provided, attend court hearings with or without the children, and provide child-focused recommendations to the court based on the best interests of the child.
- **CASM volunteers** have the same function as CASAs, except that they serve children already placed in long-term foster care.
- **Educational surrogates** undergo the same training as CASAs and often act as educational surrogates in addition to their roles as CASAs or CASMs (some surrogates act for the CASA child they are assigned to, and some for a child not assigned to a CASA). Educational surrogates ensure that schools are aware of, and address, the children’s educational needs as identified in the Individualized Educational Programs. This role does not always require that the volunteer spend as much time with the child as do CASAs or CASMs.

## Volunteer Hours

As mentioned previously, there has been no standardized method in California for collecting volunteer hours.

Volunteers perform a myriad of services to children, including but not limited to: visiting the child; transporting the child to visit family or friends; transporting the child to needed services (doctors’ appointments, and so forth); talking to significant adults in the child’s life (family, friends, school personnel, doctors, and others); attending court hearings; writing court reports; and talking to judges, attorneys, social workers, and others. In addition, volunteers must complete 40 hours of training to initially become a volunteer and then 12 hours of training annually thereafter. Volunteers state that it is difficult to track all the time they spend trying to communicate, negotiate, and advocate on behalf of a child and that they focus their attention on the issues that need resolving, rather than how much time they spend solving these issues.<sup>23</sup>

The types of hours<sup>24</sup> submitted are categorized and defined as follows to illustrate the panoply of what is reported: (1) “core hours” refers to time spent directly with the child, (2) “case hours” refers to time spent going to court, writing court reports, and talking to judges, attorneys, and social workers, etc., (3) “core/case hours” refers to core hours plus case hours, (4) “core/case/training hours” refers to core and

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<sup>22</sup>Some educational surrogates submit reports to the court and others submit reports only to the individualized education program (IEP), depending on individual program practice.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 6.

case hours plus time spent in trainings, (5) “core/case/training/travel hours” refers to core/case/training/travel hours<sup>25</sup>, and (6) “all hours” refers to core/case/training/travel hours plus other time donated to the program in general (fundraisers, office help, and so forth), as well as any other categories unidentified at this time.

California programs report that the majority of their volunteers who submit hours, do so<sup>26</sup> accordingly: Core hours alone are submitted to 11 percent of programs; case hours are submitted to 3 percent of programs; core/case hours are submitted to 17 percent of programs; core/case/training hours are submitted to 6 percent of programs; core/case/training/travel hours are submitted to 8 percent of programs; 47 percent of programs, volunteers submit *all* hours, and 8 percent of programs submit hours not as readily categorized as defined above. The total number of volunteer hours represents, at a minimum, core volunteer hours across 97 percent of programs. The total number of volunteer hours reported for 2004 was 569,473; as previously mentioned, given all the circumstances outlined on page 2, this number must be viewed cautiously.

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<sup>25</sup> Programs report (see footnote 6) that the tracking and submission of travel time depends on program practice (whether travel is tracked within or outside of city or county lines), and the physical location of the child in relation to the volunteer, and as with other volunteer activities, varies greatly from volunteer to volunteer.

<sup>26</sup> See footnote 6.

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